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LRB101 21723 LAW 72669 r

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The Illinois State Armory was built in 1936 and  
3           designed by State of Illinois architect C. Herrick Hammond; it  
4           was designated an official City of Springfield landmark by the  
5           Springfield Historic Sites Commission; it was equipped with an  
6           auditorium, a gymnasium, and a ground floor that could provide  
7           temporary seating for several thousand people; it has been the  
8           site of Governors' inaugural addresses, state social and  
9           athletic programs, theater performances, artistic exhibits,  
10          and music productions, as well as serving as the offices of the  
11          State's military and police agencies; and

12          WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has included the Illinois  
13          State Armory in the Capital Development Bill, with more than  
14          \$100 million set aside for renovations to ensure this historic  
15          downtown Springfield building can become usable again; and

16          WHEREAS, The people who have visited the Illinois State  
17          Armory, including the Cold War mayor of Berlin Willy Brandt,  
18          boxing great Muhammad Ali, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., are  
19          part of the history of the building; both John F. Kennedy and  
20          Richard M. Nixon spoke at the Armory as presidential  
21          candidates; former President Harry Truman was a guest speaker  
22          at an Armory banquet in the 1960s; and

1           WHEREAS, Specifically, civil rights leader Dr. Martin  
2 Luther King Jr. addressed the Illinois State AFL-CIO at their  
3 8th Annual Convention at the Illinois State Armory on October  
4 7, 1965; he connected labor rights with civil rights, stating,  
5 "It is not a coincidence that the Labor Movement and the Civil  
6 Rights Movement have the same essential origins. Each is a  
7 movement that grew out of burning needs of an oppressed poor  
8 for security and equality. Each was denied justice by the  
9 dominant forces of society and had to win a place in the sun by  
10 its own intense struggle and indescribable self-sacrifice";  
11 and

12           WHEREAS, That speech was recorded and preserved by the  
13 Illinois AFL-CIO, which included Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s  
14 words, "However difficult our problems may be now, however dark  
15 the day and dismal the night, I still have faith in America and  
16 in the democratic process. I still believe that working  
17 together and through a mighty coalition of conscience we will  
18 be able to solve the problems ahead"; and

19           WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words at the Illinois  
20 State Armory were as heartfelt and inspiring in 1965 as they  
21 are today; therefore, be it

22           RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL  
23 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1 CONCURRING HEREIN, that we urge the Illinois State Armory  
2 committee to capture the essence of the building's impressive  
3 history by placing a bronze plaque at the renovated facility to  
4 commemorate the treasured visit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.;  
5 and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the plaque be accompanied with quotes  
7 including the very words Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke at  
8 the Illinois State Armory on October 7, 1965, words that  
9 embrace organizational progress, justice, democracy, and a  
10 faith in God; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That honoring this great man will capture a  
12 moment in history that connected Illinois workers with the  
13 national civil rights movement; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.  
14 stated on that day, "If our two movements unite their social  
15 pioneering initiative, thirty years from now people will look  
16 back on this day and honor those who had the vision to see the  
17 full possibilities of modern society and the courage to fight  
18 for their realization.".